

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 071 471

FL 003 490

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TITLE Comments on the Socio-Historical Background to
Pidginization and Creolization.
PUB DATE Mar 69
NOTE 32p.; Revised version of remarks presented at the
Mona Conference, University of the West Indies, April
1968

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Creoles; Cultural Factors; *Dialect Studies;
Language Development; Language Patterns; *Language
Research; Language Styles; Language Typology;
*Pidgins; Social Dialects; *Sociolinguistics

ABSTRACT

This article examines several major sociological characteristics of the Caribbean region in a study of pidginization and creolization. Three major conditions which may have affected the ways that Creole languages develop are discussed. They include: (1) the relative proportion of Africans, Europeans, and other groups now present in specific Antillean societies; (2) codes of social interaction governing the relative status and the relationships of those differing groups in particular societies; and (3) specific types of community settings within which these groups become further differentiated or intermixed. (RL)

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Comments on the socio-historical background to pidginization and
creolization

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March, 1969

Revised from remarks prepared for the Mona Conference. The writer
is indebted to Jacqueline W. Mintz for essential criticisms and
suggestions, to Drs. Dell Hymes, John Reinecke and Keith Whinnom
for their useful comments on an earlier draft, and to Dr. Jan
Voorhoeve for advice and information.

I am impressed by the wide range, the richness of detail and the originality displayed in the Conference papers and in the comments upon them. To do all of this justice would be impossible even for a linguistically-sophisticated listener, which I am not; my remarks are confined to socio-historical and anthropological matters. Nor can I presume to comment upon materials dealing with cases or with geographical regions other than the Caribbean area. Moreover, much of what I had intended to say has been dealt with already by Dr. Alleyne's paper and by others, far better than I could do so. For instance--and I do not propose to review these points exhaustively--Dr. Alleyne's comments on differences in metropolitan colonial policy, and in regard to the masters' use of the same language forms as their slaves (especially in the colonies of England and France) are provocative and, I think, important. In this and other regards, I hope that what there remains for me to do has been happily abbreviated.

Nonetheless, it may be of some use if I try to sketch in briefly a few of the major socio-historical characteristics of the Caribbean region, as background to the processes of pidginization and creolization whose history has been so lengthy and so complex in this part of the globe.¹ I wish to suggest that, among the background conditions that may have affected the ways that creole languages arose and took shape, there are three whose effects may have been especially important in the

Caribbean region. The first of these conditions would be the relative proportions of Africans, Europeans and other groups, over time, present in particular Antillean societies. The second would be the codes of social interaction governing the relative statuses and the relationships of these differing groups in particular societies. And the third such condition would be the specific sorts of community settings, within which these groups became further differentiated or intermixed.

Generally speaking, the Hispano-Caribbean colonies were never dominated demographically by inhabitants of African origin; moreover, in those colonies movement from the social category of "slaves" to that of "freemen" was almost always relatively rapid and relatively continuous.

Such a generalization can be advanced only with considerable caution. But it appears to hold, on the whole, for the Hispanic Caribbean (which, until the second decade of the seventeenth century, meant all of the Caribbean); and thereafter for the Hispanic Greater Antilles (which, until 1655, meant all of the Greater Antilles). Economic development was very uneven in the Spanish islands before the late eighteenth century, and frequent manumissions were probably the consequence of this unevenness, at least in part. After the late eighteenth century, when slavery became important in Cuba and Puerto Rico (but not in Spanish Santo Domingo), and the importation of African slaves rose, there was already in these islands a large Spanish-speaking

population of mixed physical antecedents. It seems very probable that, at various periods in the histories of the Hispanic Caribbean islands, pidgins (or possibly some "less than standard" dialects of Spanish) were used; but in all of those islands that remained in Spanish hands, a standard dialect of Spanish came to prevail. (On this process, see Reinecke's interesting comments in Reinecke 1938 [1964].) Perhaps these cases might be compared to the cities of the United States Northeast at the turn of the century, when massive influxes of foreign language-speakers undoubtedly affected the English being spoken at that time.

In quite marked contrast, the Anglo-Caribbean colonies repeatedly supplanted their European settlers with African slaves, while the movement of persons from slavery to a free status was severely hampered and discontinuous. This assertion is not attributable solely to the presence of a more rigid system of slavery. In the British Leeward and Windward Islands, and in British (i.e., post-1655) Jamaica, the establishment of the plantation system drove small-scale yeomen off the land, while the profitability of slave plantations led to high slave mortality, high rates of slave importation, and rare manumission.

In French Saint Domingue and, to a lesser extent, in other Franco-Caribbean colonies, the proportion of African slaves to free Europeans early became very high; but passage from slave to free status was generally quite rapid. Saint Domingue

became French by treaty in 1697; in 1790, Moreau de St. Méry estimated that the colony had 452,000 slaves, 40,000 whites and 28,000 affranchis. The affranchis, who were of course free and of mixed ancestry, are believed to have owned up to one-third of the land and one-fourth of all of the slaves in the colony. Even if these estimates are much exaggerated, they imply that the history of Saint Domingue during the century preceding 1790 must have been remarkable, in terms of the relationships of free men to slaves, and of whites to non-whites (Leyburn 1941: 18). With regard, then, to the first two of the suggested background conditions--demographic proportions, and the codes of social relations--it is possible that the Spanish, English and French Caribbean colonies may offer some useful contrasts.

As far as the particular sorts of community setting are concerned, several principal distinctions might be drawn. The first is that between plantation and non-plantation rural settings; the second between rural and urban settings; and the third, the distinctions among predial, domestic and other categories of slaves, and among free and slave populations within the same colony. Dr. Alleyne has touched on these matters, as has Dr. Voorhoeve (1962), and they have been dealt with in many other sources, including Patterson's recent book, The Sociology of Slavery (1967), and Professor LePage's earlier Jamaican Creole (1960).

Caribbean social history has been a history of colonialism, massive immigrations, plantations and the extensive use of slave and contract labor. The islands and their surrounding shores constituted the first really convincing instance of European overseas capitalism; but it was an emergent agricultural capitalism based on forced labor, rather than on a wage-earning proletariat. The principal form of organization, the plantation, involved the use of large masses of imported (or, rarely and early, locally-enslaved aboriginal) labor, under the control of small numbers of European masters. The Spaniards introduced African slaves, the sugar cane, and plantation organization to the New World through the Greater Antilles (Cuba, Española, Puerto Rico and Jamaica), in the early sixteenth century; but this pattern had begun to decline within fifty years. It was reinitiated first in Barbados by the English, who employed indentured English laborers, but soon replaced them with African slaves. The growth of the plantation there, as in many Anglo-Caribbean colonies, also drove out free European small-scale cultivators (cf. Mintz, 1961).

A similar process occurred at about the same time in the French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe. The system was transferred to Jamaica after 1655; it was developed by the French in Saint Domingue (the western third of Española) beginning in the third quarter of the seventeenth century; and it spread through some of the Lesser Antilles under the sponsorship of

the Dutch and the Danes. Following the Haitian Revolution and the outlawing of the slave trade by Great Britain, the plantation system soon disappeared in newly-independent Haiti, and declined noticeably in Jamaica and in many of the smaller islands. Great Britain outlawed slavery in 1834, France and Denmark in 1848, the Netherlands in 1863.

The pioneer slave-based plantation system in the Hispanic Antilles had declined after about 1550. Much later, it was revived in the remaining Hispanic islands, first in Cuba, beginning about 1770, and then in Puerto Rico (though not in eastern Española). In spite of laws against the slave trade, Cuba and Puerto Rico received large numbers of African slaves in the nineteenth century; the trade only ended definitely with emancipation (Puerto Rico: 1873; Cuba: 1880). Meanwhile, after Emancipation in the British and French colonies and accompanying a second decline of traditional plantation forms in Cuba and Puerto Rico, large numbers of Asians--particularly Indians, Chinese and Javanese--were imported as contract laborers. Cuba received the bulk of Chinese immigrants; Trinidad and (then British) Guiana the bulk of Indians; and Surinam (Dutch Guiana) the bulk of Javanese--this last group continuing to arrive well into the present century. Substantial numbers of free Africans and South Europeans, particularly Portuguese, also reached the Antilles and the Guianas as contract laborers after the end of slavery. And subsequent intra-Caribbean migration has occurred

in this century as well--nearly a quarter of a million Haitians and Jamaicans, for instance, migrated to Cuba between 1912 and 1924, in response to North American plantation development in that island.

I am stressing the uneven but massive movement of new populations into and among these islands over the centuries, since such movement undoubtedly had significant socio-linguistic implications, and because the main impulse to these migrations has been one particular form of agro-social development: the plantation system.

A thorough description of that system is not practical here; moreover, adequate sociological analyses of local variants of the system have only now begun to appear. But a few general characteristics may be enumerated, as background to the linguistic processes that must have typified such social settings. Each plantation, at the outset, would be manned by a substantial number of enslaved Africans (less commonly, and particularly in the Hispanic Caribbean, of enslaved American Indians), who were politically powerless, and controlled by a very small number of free Europeans. The political basis of plantation organization was physical force, and all of its institutional arrangements facilitated the rapid and unhampered use of force to achieve desired results: the profitable production of agricultural staples for foreign investors. Typically, Caribbean slave plantations engaged two migrant groupings--the masters

and the slaves--neither of which was able to transfer more than a portion of its cultural traditions to the islands. One may suppose that, initially, pidginization of the masters' language would be part of the process of mutual adjustment necessary to carry on plantation operations. In some cases pidgin languages disappeared, being supplanted by dialectal forms of the language of the masters. In other cases, pidgin languages must have evolved into creole languages. In all Caribbean cases, however, pidgin forms failed to persist--or, at any rate, we have no evidence of their persistence, nor any way at present to determine when, in any particular case, a creole language on the one hand or a stable dialectal variant of a European language on the other may be said to have first appeared. While each island situation was different from every other, and while each such situation clearly changed over time, the pattern of social encounter of a small, powerful, monolingual European minority with a large, powerless multilingual African majority typified most of Caribbean post-Conquest history. Periods of social stabilization on one island--for instance, the post-Emancipation epoch in Jamaica--sometimes coincided with periods of rapid change in another; as Jamaica emerged from the slave-plantation epoch, Puerto Rico was busily entering upon just such an epoch (Mintz 1959). Yet the sociolinguistics of these two cases differed dramatically, since they involved populations of different proportions, living by different social codes, and with significantly different historical backgrounds. On the one hand, important sociological

and historical differences made each such case unique. Yet on the other, the colonial and immigrant character of the Caribbean area, and the remarkably rigid nature of the social systems engendered by plantation colonialism, undoubtedly affected in certain common ways the processes of language learning and linguistic differentiation. Under these general conditions, almost every Caribbean colony has been typified historically by the growth of a bipolar social structure--masses of illiterate newcomers from other world areas, dominated by tiny minorities of Europeans, with very limited opportunities for upward social or economic mobility for the laboring classes.

The early extirpation or genetic assimilation of aboriginal populations is yet another important background factor in the social history of the Antillean area. In the Caribbean, everyone but the native Indians was a newcomer. Though the general significance of this fact has been noted in comparisons between the coastal lowlands of Latin America and the highland areas of dense aboriginal concentration (Service 1955), its particular meaning in the case of the Caribbean islands has received too little attention. In other world areas, the cases most likely to come to mind are those of Australia--where essentially only one European migrant population eventually settled--and the Mascarene Islands, including Mauritius, with which some useful comparisons with the Caribbean may be made (Valkhoff, 1966; Benedict, 1961).

In effect, the European conquerors of the Antilles scourged those lands of their native inhabitants, creating vacuums within which European, African (and later, Asian) migrant populations could be accommodated. One is reminded of Mannoni's image of the European conqueror as one motivated by "the lure of a world without men"; Mannoni (1964: 101) had Madagascar in mind, but the Caribbean islands would have fitted his argument far better. I have suggested elsewhere that:

This scourging of the human landscape enabled the Europeans to set the terms of their future colonialism in the Caribbean area in ways very different from those available to them in the densely occupied areas of the non-western world. The significance of this distinction is real; the next stage in Antillean history was set in the absence of subject peoples, for the European colonist had transformed himself from guest into host simply through having eliminated his native predecessors (Mintz 1966: 918).

It was within the population "vacuums" in the Antilles created by European arms, European economics and European diseases, that the plantation system flourished. In many cases, the plantation system was so pervasive and long-lasting that only the sparsest economic alternatives were available to settlers, and those who broke out of the plantation mold had serious difficulties in establishing other modes of existence. But while the plantation system vertebrated the entire social structure of many islands, it did not function so overwhelmingly in all of them. In every colony, some measure of peasant development occurred: before the mid-seventeenth century, in the French and British Lesser Antilles; after the revolution, in Haiti; before

the rise of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century plantations in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad; and at various times on islands too small or too arid to encourage plantation development, such that alternative economic forms and different kinds of communities were established. Moreover, even in the classic plantation societies--beginning with Barbados in the mid-seventeenth century, and Jamaica, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Saint Domingue later in that century--social systems underwent differentiation of two sorts, changing these societies to some degree away from the rigid plantation model. One such sort of differentiation involved the growth of a stratum intermediate between the dominant minority and the laboring masses--a stratum genetically intermediate among other things, born of slave mothers and--usually--free European fathers. The linguistic significance of this social differentiation was of course considerable, particularly in those Antillean societies in which the number of slaves was much greater than that of free (and usually European) inhabitants. A second sort of differentiation was linked in particular to the failure of the plantation system to encourage the growth of self-sufficient island economies. Since the plantation was a European invention, hinged to a mercantilist philosophy which ordained complete economic dependence upon the industrial metropolis, most products consumed by the plantation society had to be imported. But the system never worked perfectly; and much Caribbean social history is

concerned with the growth and distinctiveness of various kinds of non-plantation community in some way complementary to the plantation system, and of the social groupings that functioned outside the boundaries of that system. I have in mind here such developments as the Maroon (runaway slave) communities of the Guianas, Jamaica, Cuba, Española, and Puerto Rico; fishing communities in all (or almost all) of the islands; "internal frontier," squatter-type peasantries in societies such as Cuba and Puerto Rico and, at a later stage, the British and French islands and the Guianas; communities on islands too small or unpromising ever to evolve a plantation economy; and so on. In each case, it seems fair to assume that some sociolinguistic concomitants to such growth may at least have been possible.

Beyond this, however, it is necessary to discuss the particular contexts within which language learning or language use took place--insofar as one may generalize about such matters. To clarify these contexts, I wish to revert to an earlier point--the relevance of the codes of social relations governing the statuses and social interactions of different groups in each society. I can only make three general points in this connection, though many more might be relevant. To begin with, one notes that the European powers differed significantly in their insistence on control of colonial political structures and decision-making. It seems clear that Spanish policy was most grudging of local autonomy, while British policy was most generous;

other colonial systems seem to have fallen somewhere between these extremes. Again, the slavery codes themselves also varied greatly. Though I insist that these codes cannot be compared nationally--that is, for example, the Spanish code with the British code, as if there were no important local or temporal distinctions--it might be correct to claim that, on the whole, the Spanish code was most liberal, the British code probably least so. The significance of distinctions in the application of slavery codes--to the extent that I am justified in drawing them--is two-fold. First, social participation of slaves and free men in the same institution, such as the church, would matter significantly. Second, where the codes encouraged (or at least permitted) the growth of an intermediate free group, the presence and increase of such a group would certainly affect the subsequent social environment.

My third point has to do with the ideology of the dominant group vis-à-vis its participation in metropolitan and in insular affairs. In each colony, the dominant classes constituted the links between the governing power and the colonial society, and the attitudes and ideologies of these classes toward their roles in the colonies varied greatly. Too little is known to allow us to view different groups of colonists along some spectrum of greater or lesser identification with the colonies in which they lived; generally speaking, however, it appears that the Spanish colonists in the Caribbean area came to identify more rapidly and more completely with their new homes than did the

French or English colonists. This may seem paradoxical since, as noted earlier, Spanish administrative control over the colonies was more rigid than that of the French and English. But one may hazard the guess that rigid colonial administration by the metropolis resulted in the swifter growth of a local or "creole" identity. Whereas the Spanish settlers in Cuba and Puerto Rico soon came to view themselves as Cubans and Puerto Ricans, the French and British colonists apparently tended more to see themselves as Europeans in temporary exile. Admittedly, there was growth of a "creole identity" throughout the Caribbean area; but there are good grounds for seeing this process comparatively and differentially. Among the factors that may have influenced this differentiation were: the types of local economic development; the presence or absence of colonial institutions within which all colonists could participate; the relative proportions of different social groupings, particularly of slaves and freemen; the distinctions of privilege established by the metropolis, to separate "creoles" from "homelanders"; and the sexual and mating codes and practices in each colony. On the whole, it appears that these factors worked to encourage the emergence of local loyalties and identities most rapidly and firmly in the Spanish islands, as I have suggested. In the French possessions, where metropolitan control was perhaps intermediate in effectiveness between that of typical Spanish and typical English colonies, the presence of a universalistic

religion, early frequent manumission and considerable interracial mating probably accelerated cultural creolization.

Though we are not in a position to confirm these assertions with confidence, they may be worthy of reflection. In cultural terms, the emergence of a "creole culture," borne by the colonial power-holders, would mean that newcomers and the socially subordinate groups in a particular colony would be provided with some sort of acculturational--and, possibly, linguistic--model. In such colonies as Cuba, where one may suppose that a pidgin language did exist, at least briefly and in those periods when the influx of multilingual slave shipments was considerable, Spanish would provide a continuing medium of communication for culturally creolized slaves and for freemen of all physical types. For the greater part of Cuba's and Puerto Rico's post-conquest history--that is, from the Discovery until at least the late eighteenth century--the relative proportions of slaves to freemen were low, and the rates of manumission apparently high. In such colonies as St. Domingue, where the importation of slaves after 1697 was both massive and rapid, the stabilization of a pidgin and the emergence of a creole language thereafter would be expectable, even though manumission was common, and the growth of an intermediate and economically influential free mulatto class--probably bilingual--was swift. Revolution and independence at the close of the eighteenth century, and the substantial elimination of the French colonists, may have

contributed powerfully to the full stabilization of Haitian Creole thereafter. (Yet admittedly, a French-based creole language also typifies Martinique, Guadeloupe and other French Antilles, with markedly different histories.) In the British possessions, rapid slave importations and the substantial lack of a firm creole culture, a numerous intermediate group, or insular institutions that could unify the colonial population, probably contributed to the particular linguistic situations typical of these colonies.

Any careful evaluation of such factors in sociolinguistic terms is quite impossible, at least at the present time; yet their relevance, I think, is real. We have been hearing about target-languages affecting the nature of linguistic change; we may ask ourselves about target-cultures, affecting the nature of cultural change. At any rate, I would argue that the more a Cuban slave were to identify with his master, the more Cuban he became; whereas the more a Jamaican slave were to identify with his master, the less Jamaican he would become. Such an argument has to do with the social continuities or discontinuities typical of the colonial social structure in each case, and also with those which typified the relationships of the colony to the motherland. Presumably, if social linkages between the bottom-most and top-most groupings in the colony were close, and those to the metropolis were weaker, the colonial language picture was likely to be one of a regional dialect. In contrast, if the

social linkages between the top-most colonial groupings and the motherland were closer than ties among groups within the colony, the more likely that the colonial language picture would be one of a regional dialect spoken by the ruling group, and of a pidgin language becoming a creole language for the remainder of the population.

Haitian Creole is in some ways the most interesting Antillean case in this connection. Though a French colonial society had begun to form in western Española even before the 1697 cession to France, only after that year did the colony begin its brilliant career as the world's richest European possession. Less than a century later, it lay in ruins; by the time that the Revolution had ended in 1804, the slave population is believed to have fallen substantially, the European population had practically disappeared, and the free colored population had declined very sharply. Thereafter, Haiti was largely isolated from the world outside for more than a century. French remained the official language, while Haitian Creole remained the language of the people.

Our knowledge of the language history of pre-revolutionary Haiti is, at best, slight. But surely the Revolution radically altered the relationship between the French of Haiti and the language (or languages) of the slaves. After 1804, the impact of French--of any dialect of French--on the speech of the ordinary folk was sharply reduced, at least until recent decades.

This is a very different picture from what is known for Martinique and Guadeloupe, for instance, which remain closely tied to metropolitan France--and which, as I have admitted, continue to use a French-based creole language to this day. The closeness or remoteness of ties to the metropolis, in other words, will very probably turn out to be far less important than the initial conditions under which a creole language does or does not become stabilized.

Hoetink, the Dutch sociologist-historian, has given an interesting interpretation of the relationship between language and society in the Caribbean, by suggesting that the readiness to mix racially (or the absence of that readiness) determines the extent of "cultural homogenization" (which I would see as a somewhat different matter from "cultural creolization") and, accordingly, what happened linguistically. He points out that creole languages are found where the trend was against the formation of a physically intermediate group:

"The best illustration of this homogenization is probably provided by the fact that in all Latin Caribbean societies the language of the Iberian mother country became the commonly spoken and written language, while in virtually none of the societies of the North-West European variant is one language the official as well as the common language. In Haiti, French is the official language, Créole the common one; in the British West Indies English is the official language and Anglo-Créole or French Créole the common one; in the French islands French and French-Créole, respectively; in the Dutch Windward Islands, English or Dutch and Anglo-Créole; in Surinam, Dutch and Sranang (apart from the Asian languages); in the Dutch Leeward Islands, Dutch and Papiamentu. The linguistic situation in the North-West European variant reflects the cleavage which has always existed between the original dominant segment and the great majority of non-whites, while in the Iberian variant the linguistic situation reflects the linking function of the coloured group" (1967: 178).

Clearly, specific sociological, attitudinal and demographic details did matter tremendously. But the analysis of particular historical events or trends may throw light upon the language situation in each case, and illuminate as well our usages of such terms as "ambiguity", "ambivalence," code-switching," "interference," and the like, in discussing these cases from the past.

If we turn from this level of generalization to somewhat less abstract and more contemporary cases, it may be worth suggesting that the study of particular kinds of communities in the Caribbean region could contribute to our understanding of the way historical forces may have affected linguistic change. I am thinking of events occurring at the time of, and after, the emancipation of the slaves in Jamaica, with regard to rural populations in that country. Jamaica stands almost alone among Anglo-Caribbean possessions in the establishment of a numerous peasant class after Emancipation (but cf. Farley 1953 and 1954). This partial reconstitution of Jamaican society on a yeoman basis was accomplished largely through the activities of the non-Establishment missionary churches, especially the Baptist and Methodist groups, who arranged to purchase "ruinate" sugar and cattle properties and to settle their parishioners upon them. I have contended elsewhere that this process was of considerable sociological and economic significance for Jamaica; it seems to me that it may also have had certain sociolinguistic

implications. In each such case, the peasant community included in its formation a church and a school, and all (or nearly all) of the parishioners thus settled were at least partly literate. Though we do not know precisely how many Jamaican freedmen were settled in this fashion, between 1838 and 1844, 19,000 ex-slaves and their families removed themselves from the estates and obtained land in free villages (Paget n.d. [1951?]). Quite possibly, almost half of the former field slaves in Jamaica were affected; and since most of the original church-founded free villages are still identifiable, it is curious that no careful sociological study has been made of them, much less a study of their linguistic peculiarities, if any (cf. Cumper 1954, and Mintz 1958). Other distinctive communities that might reward sociolinguistic study include fishing villages (cf. Price 1966), and what were originally runaway (Maroon) communities. It is not at all clear that local speech would reflect sociological or occupational differences in these cases; but it would be interesting to know.

These comments upon Caribbean social history are intended only to suggest the relevance of that history to the study of pidgins and creoles. I would like to make several additional general observations in this connection. Without joining the argument over the precise classification of pidgins, creoles and other such "poorly-fitting" languages, I would suggest that the Caribbean region has many languages that may be creoles, and that have usually been described in this way, but absolutely

no language--if I understand correctly--that can be regarded today as a pidgin.

If it is correct to claim that the Caribbean region has creole languages but not pidgins, then it should follow that in the early colonial history of this region, wherever speakers of (probably three or more) different languages interacted, some single language soon emerged as a new native tongue for the subordinate group, at the same time that its members would be forsaking their former native tongues.

I am implying that language usage in the Caribbean region probably never for long involved three or more different language communities, all of which retained their own languages while employing a pidgin as well.

Dr. Cassidy has suggested that the transformation of a pidgin into a creole can probably take place very swiftly. And in an earlier comment, Dr. Joos submitted that, in the formalization of pidgins, linguistic "defects"--I think he used that term--emerge inevitably from a lack of solidarity and of any prospect of solidarity between speakers and addressees. Speakers and addressees, in other words, are not--and probably are not encouraged to expect to become--members of the same social group; learners are not learning to be part of a single community with those from whom they are learning. Dr. Joos went on to say that, under severe circumstances, pidgin languages come swiftly into some kind of equilibrium, due to needs that are not general community

needs. We have seen how the plantation system created non-communities upon the Caribbean landscape--socially artificial collocations of slaves and masters--of a sort that would presumably hasten just such a process of linguistic stabilization.

Thus we appear to be dealing with historical circumstances that led repeatedly to the emergence of pidgin languages--but that also led either to their swift conversion into creoles, or to their replacement by the language of the dominant social group. Pidgin languages apparently did not survive anywhere in the Caribbean region, but were instead supplanted--one supposes quite swiftly, in at least some cases--by creole languages on the one hand, or by more or less standard dialects of the masters' language, on the other.² When I stress the marked presence of surviving creole languages in the Caribbean region, and the marked absence of surviving pidgin languages, I think I am making a less obvious sociological or historical point, as well as a more obvious linguistic one. The relationship to demographic factors is worth remarking, and one wonders whether parallel demographic and linguistic processes could be documented elsewhere.

Yet another relevant feature of the Caribbean situation, however, has to do with the Hispanic Caribbean in particular. Dr. Lawton noted in his paper that there is no evidence of a pidgin language in the history of Puerto Rico, nor of a creole language in that country. I think one can go further. Spain was unchallenged in these islands for nearly a century; and there were no European attempts to settle there, in defiance of Spanish

claims, for much longer than that. Spain's control of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the eastern two-thirds of Santo Domingo persisted, virtually uninterruptedly, until the mid-nineteenth century, and until the brink of the twentieth, in the case of Puerto Rico and Cuba. Yet I know no irrefutable evidence of any pidgin or creole language, past or present, in any of these Greater Antillean Spanish possessions.

Santo Domingo is perhaps especially striking in this regard, when compared with contiguous Haiti, where the largest national creole-speaking population in the world is to be found. It needs mentioning that absence of evidence of the prior existence of any pidgin language in these Hispanic islands by no means proves that there never were any such languages there, however; in fact, it would be surprising if pidgin languages did not at one time exist in those colonies. This question has been discussed in Reinecke's (1938[1964]) pioneering paper.

We need to ask ourselves why there appear to be no surviving pidgin languages in the Caribbean (Tagliavini's 1931 reference to "Negro Spanish" in Cuba remains obscure); and we must also wonder why there are no clearly-defined creole languages in the Hispanic Caribbean. On the one hand, such apparent non-occurrences suggest other questions about the social history of the region; on the other, where a creole language has embedded itself deeply in the social fabric of Caribbean societies, we are moved to wonder how this could have come about. I have made inconclusive

reference to the Haitian case; let me now touch briefly on one other.

In a socio-historical study of Curaçao, Hoetink briefly compares that society with Surinam, in terms of linguistic creolization (Hoetink 1958: 148-149). In Surinam, the development of Sranan Tongo and of the Bush Negro creole languages (Voorhoeve 1962) probably shared some of the sociological features of the pidginization and creolization processes characteristic of what Reinecke (1938[1964]: 539-542) has called "plantation creoles." The European metropolitan languages (English, Portuguese and Dutch) were the languages employed by the uppermost strata of Surinam society at different times in that colony's history; but at no time did a creole language serve as a lingua franca among them. Surinam creole languages became stabilized as the idioms of subordinate groups, including those descendants of runaway slaves who became the Bush Negroes; they did not supplant the languages of the upper strata, though they became second languages in certain cases for members of those strata.

The pidginization and creolization processes in the case of Curaçao occurred under different social conditions, however, and had--Hoetink tells us--very different linguistic consequences. In Curaçao, Papiamentu served typically as a means of communication between groups of different social levels (although Curaçao was never a typical plantation colony). But in Curaçao, there were two upper stratum groups: the Portuguese-speaking Jewish

colonists from Brazil; and the Dutch-speaking Protestant colonists from the Netherlands. Cultural interpenetration of these two groups was slight. Both groups learned and employed Papiamentu, not only to communicate with their social subordinates, but also in order to communicate with each other. There is a strong socio-historical suggestion here that the presence of two "master-groups" speaking mutually unintelligible languages, in contact with a subordinate group speaking a creole language, may well lead to the adoption of the creole by the master-groups as a common tongue. Naturally, we would want to know more of the specific circumstances in these cases; but Hoetink has given us a valuable socio-historical hint for the study of Caribbean (and possibly other) pidginization and creolization.

In approaching my conclusion, I would like to suggest that, in spite of the obvious difficulties, some useful purpose may be served by attempts to formulate the conditions under which pidgin languages may develop, as well as those under which pidgin languages may be transformed into creole languages. In my own first attempts at such formulations, I found myself restricted by my own ignorance to the Caribbean region--essentially, that is, to but one portion of Reinecke's "plantation creole" category. While I want to be the first to admit that the conditions here set forth are contradicted by non-Caribbean cases (and perhaps by some Caribbean cases, as well), I hope that this exercise will lead to others of a more refined and telling sort.

In my view, Caribbean creole languages were produced under particular historical circumstances, including:

- 1) the repeopling of empty lands;
- 2) by two linguistically different groups;
- 3) one of which was smaller and socially dominant;
- 4) and the other of which was larger, socially subordinate, and included native speakers of two or more languages;
- 5) under conditions in which the dominant group initiates the speaking of a pidgin that becomes common to both groups-- that is, conditions under which the dominant group, at least, is bilingual, and the subordinate group multilingual; and,
- 6) there is no established linguistic continuum including both the pidgin and the native language of the dominant group; and
- 7) the subordinate group cannot maintain its original languages, either because the numbers of speakers of any one of its languages are insufficient, or because social conditions militate against such perpetuation, or for both reasons.

To be sure, each one of these suggested conditions would have to be tested against each Caribbean case for which the data are researchable; and I remain quite uncertain as to the relevance of these conditions for non-Caribbean cases. I offer these suggestions with considerable tentativeness.³

Whether it can be reasonably argued that qualitatively different linguistic processes are involved in the emergence

of pidgins and creoles from those governing other sorts of linguistic change is of course much in doubt. Nevertheless, more linguists than before are beginning to take account of the unusual sociological circumstances surrounding the emergence of at least some creole languages. Lounsbury, for instance, has recently (1968: 205-206) written:

"There is a possibility that gross typological differences reflect, if not thought or culture, then something of the accidents of the social histories of speech communities, as these have created periods and circumstances in which traditional linguistic structures were, one might say, destroyed, and language rebuilt, putting (as Powell and so many others expressed it) 'old materials to new uses.' It may be of interest in this connection that the purest 'analytic' and 'isolating' languages known are the Pidgins and Creolized languages. These have long been the unwanted stepchildren of linguistic science. But it is in these that one can see most clearly something like the first principle in the building of grammar that was posited by the evolutionary typologists. One may note that the historical circumstances that gave birth to the Pidgins and Creolized languages were far more drastic and destructive of continuity of tradition in language than were those that gave impetus to change in the modern 'analytic' Romance vernaculars, or in early modern English."

Thus put, pidgin and creole languages may be in some way testaments to the remarkable psychic and intellectual resiliency of mankind; certainly the New World plantation slavery experience tested the human spirit to the limit. From this perspective, surely one ought to be encouraged by the concern shown at the Mona Conference for the practical implications of the phenomena we study. Our human future, viewed as an understanding reconstitution of the past, must certainly include some redressing of the balance, some reintegration, some serious attempt to bring into being new kinds of organic, humanly rewarding social entities.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 I have attempted to treat some of these background aspects in three previously published papers, but without particular reference to language history. Cf. Mintz, 1966, 1967, and 1968.
- 2 Parenthetically, one may note Dr. Alleyne's hypothetical linguistic acculturational situation in West Africa, near the European slave stations where, he believes, Africans were motivated to learn a European language--but presumably not at the cost of giving up their own. I think the presumption would further be that these Africans did form language communities, for whom any version of a European language could be considered a second language.
- 3 Following the oral presentation of my remarks, Dr. Joos handed me a series of handwritten hypotheses concerning the creation and modification of pidgin languages. I thought the hypotheses unusually insightful and provocative, and included them in a footnote in an earlier draft of my report; my own statement of criteria for the formation of creoles in the Caribbean was partly stimulated by them. Though Dr. Joos did not intend these hypotheses for publication, he consented to their use in this volume on the understanding that their impromptu origin, not representing a complete, deliberated presentation, be made clear. Because of their length and their relevance to the first section of this book, the editor has wished to transfer them there.

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